



## *Renaissance Academy at Chicago NFP*

*Spring 2024*

*April 9 – May 16*

*Located at*

*Saint Xavier University*

*3700 West 103rd Street*

*We are back on the SXU campus for Spring!*

*We will also offer a selection of classes*

*online via Zoom.*

## **What is the Renaissance Academy?**

The Renaissance Academy is a collegial association of retired and semi-retired men and women who meet to continue to experience intellectual growth in an environment that is open to all who believe in the importance of pursuing the Academy's lifelong learning opportunities and who are willing to contribute to the common goals through active participation in the programs offered.

## **Renaissance Academy Information**

Email: [renaissancechgo@gmail.com](mailto:renaissancechgo@gmail.com).

Phone: 773-298-3149. **This is an answering machine only. Please leave a message.**

The Newsletter can be accessed on the Renaissance Academy website:  
<https://www.renaissancechgo.org>.

## **Spring 2024 Registration**

We are back on the SXU campus for Spring and will also offer a Zoom class on Wednesday.

**If you enrolled as a current member, you just need to register for classes.**

**Registration runs from March 8-15 on line at:**

**<https://www.renaissancechgo.org>**

If you are not currently a member and wish to join Renaissance Academy, please go to <https://www.renaissancechgo.org>, select "Membership" and fill out the enrollment form. The membership enrollment fee for the entire year is \$180 and instructions for payment are on the site.

**Every member must have access to email. No information or materials will be mailed.**

The fee includes: classes for all three terms, Christmas and Spring luncheons, use of the Shannon Center track on Tuesdays and Thursdays, Renaissance Forum and the opportunity to audit an SXU class with consent of professor.

**While participating in our various programs, you may be included in photos and/or videos. These photographs and videos are used in a variety of publications and advertising materials. By registering for our programs, participants consent to the use of these photos and videos.**

Requests for assistance can be emailed to  
[renaissancechgo@gmail.com](mailto:renaissancechgo@gmail.com).

**The final date for registering is  
March 15, 2024.**



“Whan that April with his showres soote  
The droughte of March hath perced to the roote,  
And bathed every veine in swich licour,  
Of which vertu engendred is the flour;  
Whan Zephyrus eek with his sweete breethe  
Inspired hath in every holt and heethe  
The tendre croppes...

And small fowles maken melody....

Thanne longen folk to goon on pilgrimages...”

*The Canterbury Tales: General Prologue* by Geoffrey Chaucer

Surely, I’m not the only one who had to memorize this poem in High School! It’s fun to note how it resonates with the Renaissance Spring Catalog: birds singing (Mike Hastings), poetry sharing (Jean Day), longing to go on pilgrimage (to Ireland with Sharon Gerc & Voyages of Exploration with Mike Young), breezes inspiring (Artistic Women with Sue Wrzesinski) and so on.

How delightful to have such a variety of classes to choose from this term. It will be a time of renewal and inspiration. See you on campus!

Maureen

**Spring 2024 Session  
April 9 – May 16  
On Campus**

**Tuesday 2:30-3:30**

1. **Law for the Layman**  
**Jay Gyarmathy**
2. **History's Greatest Voyages of Exploration Part II**  
**Mike Young**

**Tuesday 3:45- 4:45**

3. **News and Views**  
**Mike Yeager and team**
4. **Understanding the Mysteries of Human Behavior**  
**Maureen Connolly**

**Spring 2024 Session  
April 9 – May 16  
Zoom**

**Wednesday**

**12:00 -1:00**

**5. The Novels You Weren't Ready for in High School**

***The Color Purple***

**Carol Conway**

**Spring 2024 Session  
April 9 – May 16  
On Campus**

**Thursday 2:30 – 3:30**

6. **Anatomy of a Song**

**Betty Kort**

7. **The Great Tours; Ireland and Northern Ireland**

**Sharon Coghlan Gerc**

**Thursday 3:45 – 4:45**

8. **Return and Renewal: Spring Migration**

**Mike Hastings**

9. **Six Artists You Should Know**

**Sue Wrzesinski**

**Tuesday 2:30 - 3:30  
On Campus**

## **1. Law for the Layman**

**Jay Gyarmathy**

This course will cover a variety of topics such as the origins of the law and substantive topics like probate, wills, contracts, domestic and criminal law.

Procedural law will be addressed by looking at the factors a lawyer analyses before representing a client and exploring the anatomy of a lawsuit.

Warning! The course is not a substitute for getting legal counsel for a specific legal issue but will be helpful in understanding legal jargon and how a legal matter is resolved.





## 2. History's Greatest Voyages of Exploration Part II

Mike Young

This course is based on the Great Courses/Wondrium program. Starting with some examples of our “genetic wanderlust”, Professor



Vejas Gabriel Liulevicius examines the motivations and skills of ancient explorers and the expansion of humans worldwide.

Over the following weeks, each half hour film will look at the travels of specific adventurers and the driving forces that set them on their path.

We will travel through the medieval Muslim world, explore the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans with the Portuguese, sail to the New World with Columbus and circumnavigate the Earth with Magellan.

Back on land, we'll conquer and plunder South and Central America with the Conquistadors and finish by sailing into North Americas frozen North with Hudson.

We learn the stories of these adventurers, both successful and unsuccessful, and their consequences for history. Key themes of the course include the fact that one journey can produce a cascade of others, the range of ways unknown peoples were encountered from friendship to violence, the complicated motivations of the explorers and the common drive to discover. There should be lots to talk about!!

**Tuesday 3:45 - 4:45**

**SXU on campus**

### **3. News and Views**

**Pat Clair, Jim Condon, Nancy North,  
Bern Stiemann, Mike Yeager, Mike Young**

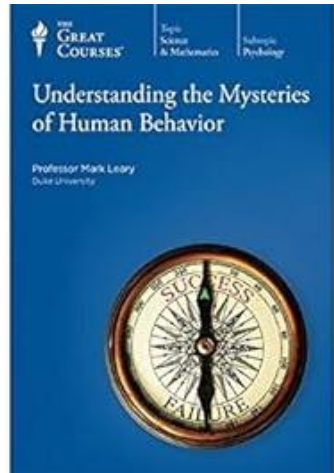
Today's day is filled with events that alter, illuminate and often surprise us and you are there front and center! Join us as we attempt to make sense of the news of the day. Your perspective, of course, is always welcome.



## 4. Understanding the Mysteries of Human Behavior

Maureen Connolly

The DVD program chosen for the spring session is from *The Great Courses*. It is a set of lectures that examines some particularly puzzling aspects of human nature—features of people’s thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that have intrigued scientists and laypeople alike. Relying on the latest theories and research from psychology, neuroscience, and other behavioral sciences, each lecture in this course addresses a provocative question about human behavior.



Professor Mark Leary, a Family Professor of Psychology and Neuroscience at Duke University, will present this series of lectures. Professor Leary is the author of a dozen books on social motivation, emotion and ego. He is among the world’s top social and personality psychologists and has received a Lifetime Career Award from the International Society for Self and Identity.

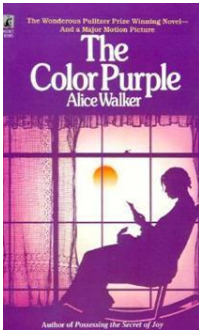
## Wednesday Zoom

12:00 PM – 1:00 PM Zoom

### 5. The Novels You Weren't Ready for in High School

*The Color Purple*

Carol Conway



**THE NOVEL YOU MIGHT NOT HAVE READ  
IN HIGH SCHOOL** (because it hadn't been  
written yet 😊).

Join us for a discussion of Alice Walker's  
Pulitzer Prize winning novel. **Because it is  
written in letters, there are no chapters. So  
please be sure to get this edition that you  
can find in libraries or on Google.**

If you can't find the Pocket Book edition, please get any book  
and read up to the letter that begins: "Dear God, Ain't nothing  
wrong with Shug Avery."

**Please read the first 49 pages for the first class. (The  
pages are very small with few words.)**

Thursday 2:30 – 3:30

SXU on campus

## 6. Anatomy of a Song

Betty Kort



Are you a fan of music? Let's explore together the origins of well-known pop rock songs from our youth. The presentations in this class are independent looks at iconic songs based on interviews with Marc

Myers' two books, *Anatomy of a Song* - a total of 100 songs and so far, the class has covered just 18.

No prerequisite required. Topics will go beyond just Myers interviews as the facilitator is famous for her ability to go down a rabbit hole and bringing the class with her.

Are you a fan of Loretta Lynn, Bob Dylan, Rolling Stones, Tammy Wynette, Steppenwolf, Creedence Clearwater Revival? These and many more artists and their iconic songs will be discussed in *Anatomy of a Song*.



## 7. The Great Tours;

### Ireland and Northern Ireland Continued

Sharon Coghlan Gerc

Do you want to tour Ireland with us this spring? You are invited to continue with our tours of Ireland starting with Dublin. We will explore the history, world-renowned culture, breathtaking



landscapes, and welcoming people of the Emerald Isle. The Great Courses will take us on the tours and offer insight on the history of Northern Ireland and its neighbors. Each 30-minute tour includes beautiful scenery and historical information about Ireland and Northern Ireland. Those who have been to Ireland already are encouraged to share their experiences as we watch and tour Ireland together during the term. These courses offer us twenty-four tours that we will choose from during the next year. Tours in this ongoing series include Prehistoric and Celtic Ireland; Dublin's Fair City; Dublin; Kilkenny; Exploring Cork; The Dingle Peninsula; North Kerry; Clare and Galway; The Irish Revival in Literature and Art; James Joyce's Ireland; Experiencing Belfast; Pub Life

and traditional Irish Music and Ireland in Film and Sport. **Prior attendance from last term is NOT required because each video journey is complete on its own.**

“Ireland’s history is a passionate, painful, and inspiring one. It’s a history defined by wave after wave of invaders, all contributing to the complex and diverse culture. In Ireland, the past is always a prominent feature of the present. Each stage of the nation’s history reveals a great deal about the Irish people – their culture and their identities – even today” (Conner, M., The Great Tours, Ireland, and Northern Ireland. The Great Courses, 2020).

Join us as we tour the beautiful cities and scenic landscapes of Ireland with our Renaissance Academy classmates this spring. Next stop is Dublin!!



**Thursday 3:45 - 4:45**

**SXU on campus**

**8. Spring  
Migration:**

**Return and  
Renewal**

**Mike Hastings**



"Every spring, a spectacle unfolds in the night sky and millions of birds attempt a long perilous journey between their wintering grounds and their summer breeding grounds. Most of the thousands of bird species that engage in this annual migration travel at night, when the wind currents are smoother and the moon and stars guide their way. The birds typically follow established flyways generally north-south routes that offer the best opportunities for rest and refueling along the way. Multiple bird species share these flight paths as they contend with rough weather, dehydration, starvation and the threat of predation." (P. Runwal, National Geographic, 5/5/2021)





## 9. Six Artists You Should Know

### Sue Wrzesinski

For spring this year, I've selected six artists from different eras and with different styles. **Alma Thomas** and **Hilma af Klint** are women artists who have been “discovered”. Hilma af Klint is considered the first abstract artist while Alma Thomas has become famous for her work done after she retired. **Frida Kahlo's** most important and potent subject was herself. **Van Gogh, Whistler, and Wyeth** all painted the real world but painted almost nothing realistically.

Before each class I will send students links to videos that give background information providing better images than I can show in my slides. Students really enjoy these videos!



Andrew Wyeth, *Wind from the Sea*

# **APRIL IS NATIONAL POETRY MONTH!**

**Let's celebrate by getting together and sharing our favorite poems!**

**Jean Day - facilitator**

**Choose a poem from your childhood, your high school or college days, or a verse that has pulled at your heart for some reason or another. It could be funny, touching, and/or thought provoking. It could be beautifully phrased or discordant. It could be a song, a rap, or a psalm.**

**You may want to share why this poem is meaningful to you. You may want to read it, sing it, or recite it from memory. Anything goes!**

**Please join us on April 23 at 11:00 A.M.**

**Location:  
Evergreen Park Library  
9400 S. Troy Avenue  
Evergreen Park, IL**

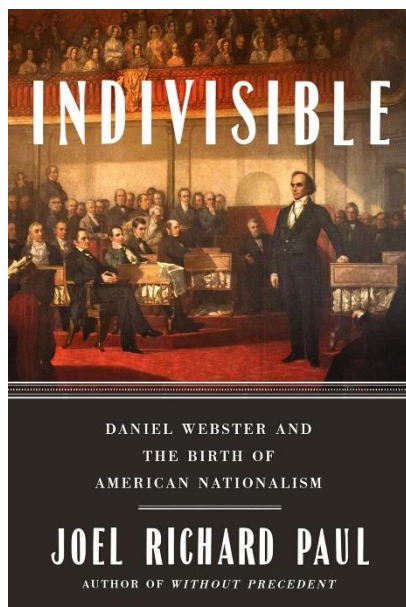


**Book Club – Oak Lawn Library  
May 2023 TBA**

***Indivisible: Daniel Webster and the Birth of  
American Nationalism***

**By Joel Richard Paul  
Mike Hastings – Facilitator**

"Just a few decades into existence as more than a hodgepodge of British colonies, the "United States was less reality than aspiration and "American" national identity was mostly a convenient fiction. Joel Richard Paul's book, retraces the process by which that fiction became a reality. In Paul's telling, a type of civic nationalism based on shared allegiance to the Constitution, as an "organic expression of the will of "We the People", proved victorious with Daniel Webster as its champion."



- New Republic, Nov. 15, 2022, David Marques.

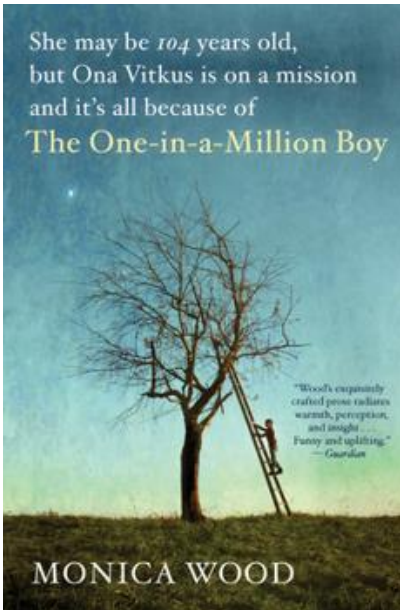
**Sisters of Mercy Meeting Place**

**10024 S. Central Park**

**Monday, June 3, at 12:30**

**Carol Conway – Facilitator**

***The One in a Million Boy* by Monica Wood**



I chose this simply because it's the lovely story of the unlikely friendship between a 104-year-old woman and a 10-year-old boy.

I think you'll love it!

# Spring 2024

## Dates to Remember

|                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| March 8-15           | Spring Registration  |
| April 9              | First day of Spring term   |
| April 23<br>11:00 AM | Book Club Poetry<br>Evergreen Park Library   |
| May TBA              | Book Club <i>Indivisible</i><br>Oak Lawn Library   |
| May 16               | Last day of Spring term  |
| May 21<br>12:00 PM   | Spring Luncheon<br>Orland Chateau  |
| June 3<br>12:30 PM   | Book Club<br><i>The One in a Million Boy</i><br>Sisters of Mercy Meeting Place<br>10024 S Central Park |



# OFFICERS, COMMITTEE & BOARD MEMBERS

## 2023-2024

|                             |                           |
|-----------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>President:</b>           | Maureen O'Connor          |
| <b>Vice President:</b>      | Jean Day                  |
| <b>Secretary:</b>           | Cathy Morrin              |
| <b>Treasurer:</b>           | Sharon Gerc               |
| <b>Information Systems:</b> | Jim Condon                |
| <b>Consultant:</b>          | Eileen M. Holderbaum      |
| <b>SXU Liaison:</b>         | Linda Moreno/ Sandra Diaz |

### STANDING COMMITTEES

|                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| <b>Care:</b>                        | Melaine Herbert  |
| <b>Curriculum:</b>                  | Sue Wrzesinski* /Grace Ann Kartheiser  |
| <b>Historian:</b>                   | Pat Schultz  |
| <b>Information Systems Support:</b> | Vanessa Glover / Mary Johnson<br>Pat Schultz   |
| <b>Membership:</b>                  | Betty Kort   |
| <b>Newsletter:</b>                  | Peggy Dosch*<br>Mary Healy / Maureen O'Connor  |
| <b>Office Managers:</b>             | Mike Yeager*<br>Vanessa Glover/ Rita Hannon  |
| <b>Publicity:</b>                   | Carol Conway   |
| <b>Renaissance Forum:</b>           | Joanne Gruca* / Pat Clair<br>Therese Cunningham/ Mary Howley   |
| <b>Special Events:</b>              | Sandra Stephens* / Marci Janas*<br>Chris Biros / Sharon Gerc<br>Marianne Grisolano / Joyce Martin<br>Marion McFarland / Judy Regan<br>Sr. Joan Weithman / Mike Young |

\*Committee Chairperson or Co-Chairpersons